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EASTERN EUROPEAN INTELLIGENCER

OCI# 1017/72
1 Dec. 1972Albania Rejects Soviet Olive Branch

The Soviets extended their annual olive branch to Albania in several papers on the occasion of Tirana's celebration of the 60th anniversary of its independence and the 28th anniversary of the Communist takeover. The gesture elicited strongly worded rebuffs from the Albanian leadership, which were coupled with fulsome praise for Tirana's Chinese ally. Speaking in the southern coastal city of Vlore on Monday, Politburo member Hysni Kapo ridiculed the Soviet peace tactics, asserting that "just as we have not been intimidated by the armed threats, we are not deceived by the waving of the olive branch." Kapo claimed that Moscow owed Albania great "political, ideological, and economic" debts, and said that normalized relations depended on the Soviet people and the "genuine Bolsheviks" intervening to establish "Marxist-Leninist revolutionary justice" on these questions.

In his national day speech, party boss Enver Hoxha effusively praised the aid Albania receives from China, which he described as "without interest or political condition", and contrasted it with the Soviet aid of the 1950's ("painted machines of old workshops"), which was nothing but an attempt to "intensively sabotage the development of our economy." The Albanian party leader revealed that Tirana is paying back earlier Soviet credits.

Reminiscing further about Soviet machinations, Hoxha quotes Soviet Defense Minister Rodion Malinovsky whispering to Khrushchev, (upon seeing the magnificent Vlore bay): "You understand, Nikita Sergeyevich, with the missiles from Berlin and East Germany we now can hit Gibraltar, while from Vlore bay we have in the palm of our hand all the Mediterranean." With obvious satisfaction, Hoxha retorts that "they had in the palm of their hands the wind." Recalling a similar incident, when Malinovsky eyed Lake Butrint, on the southern Albanian coast near the Greek border, as a potential submarine base ("Greece would be ours"), Hoxha assures the Greek people that Tirana would never allow this to happen. Conciliatory words for Athens aside, Hoxha broke no new ground in his remarks on the United States, reiterating the usual Albanian

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broadside against US imperialism. [REDACTED]

Poland and Norway Sign Trade and Cooperation Agreements

Polish and Norwegian foreign trade ministers signed two long-term agreements this week in Oslo: a five-year trade agreement retroactive to 1971, and a ten-year agreement on economic, industrial and scientific-technical cooperation. The agreements resulted primarily from Polish initiatives and are part of Warsaw's policy of expanding ties with all the Scandinavian countries. Current Polish trade with the area is relatively small and amounts to about 4% of Poland's overall foreign trade; of the five Nordic countries, Norway ranks fourth, exceeding only Iceland's share of Polish trade. Poland, at present, accounts for only about 1% of the foreign trade of all the Scandinavian countries.

Even with these new trade arrangements, Poland's ties with Norway are limited. These agreements, however, help both countries break out of their respective blocs in the spirit of East-West detente. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Norway's consultations and exchanges with Poland are more advanced and more cordial than with any other Eastern European country. [REDACTED]

Signals From Prague?

Czechoslovakia is once again playing with the wording of its position on the 1938 Munich Agreement. Prague's adamant insistence that the "Munich Diktat" be declared invalid from the beginning (ab initio) has forced its negotiations with West Germany over the normalization of relations into an impasse.

Moscow's conspicuous omission of ab initio formula from the 19 November Soviet-Bulgarian communique has sparked wide-spread rumors in the West that the Soviets no longer support Prague on this contentious issue. Furthermore, several observers have expressed the belief that Moscow is now pushing the Czechoslovaks to remove this last impediment to detente in Europe.

The Czechoslovaks have themselves added further fuel to the speculation that there is a change in the wind. On the very day of the Soviet-Bulgarian communique, there were no less than three reiterations of the ab initio formula in the Czechoslovak press. However, since that time, such references have been assiduously avoided. The change began

with a 23 November speech by Foreign Minister Chnoupek. The original version released by CTK (Czechoslovak Press Bureau) utilized the phrase "initial invalidity" in place of the usual "invalid from the beginning." A later CTK release deleted the reference to "initial" completely. Since then, all public utterances of Czechoslovak leaders have avoided the ab initio formula.

Speaking on 29 November, Party Secretary Husak called for the restoration of relations with West Germany "on condition that there will be a clear dissociation from the Hitlerite Aggression against the Czechoslovak State--of which the Munich Diktat was a part." Prague has dropped the ab initio formula in public statements before, only to revive them again. Therefore, it remains to be seen if this recent development marks a genuine willingness to grant concessions to Bonn, or is merely another false signal. As it stands now, the ball remains in Prague's court.

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Acting Greek Foreign Minister Concludes Visit to Romania

Acting Greek Foreign Minister Kavalieratos' official visit to Bucharest from 24-28 November was long on publicity and short on substance. The only agreement to emerge was a ten year bilateral accord covering a wide range of cultural and scientific exchanges. Kavalieratos' presence in Romania, nonetheless, was given extensive coverage in the press, as was his meeting on 27 November with President Ceausescu. The lengthy communique issued at the conclusion of the visit contains a reference to CSCE tailor-made to Romanian wishes: All states should "participate on the basis of equality." The two sides also expressed a desire to intensify and develop peaceful cooperation and collaboration in the Balkans, as well as the "importance of establishing a climate of peace and cooperation in the Mediterranean."

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The Romanian Consumer May Get a Break

There may be a glimmer of hope for the beleaguered Romanian consumer who has recently been asked to make another notch in his already tight belt. The Council of Ministers, on 28 November, created a new Council for Coordination and Orientation of Services and Supplies to the population.

While the populace has been asked to adopt an even more austere lifestyle, the regime appears intent on speeding up the delivery of those goods that are available. Deputy

Premier Virgil Trofin, one of Ceausescu's right-hand men, has been appointed to the Council's chairmanship. Even without the current emphasis on frugality, it has been clear for some time that the regime was going to have to do something about shortcomings in the economy. An inadequate organizational and managerial system has been an omnipresent problem resulting in low productivity. The initial impression from reading press coverage of Trofin's job indicates he will be taking a long, hard look at the middle level managers where much of the problem appears to lie.

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